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13. "A Review of Gosse's 'From Shakespeare to Pope.'"

Professor Shepherd in reviewing Gosse's "From Shakespeare to Pope" spoke in highly commendatory terms of the pleasant and agreeable style of treatment pursued by the author, but at the same time regretted that he had not dealt with his subject in a more philosophical and critical manner, drawing a contrast between Mr. Gosse's lectures and the scholarly dissertations of Mark Pattison in the Prefaces to his editions of Pope. Mr. Shepherd thought that Mr. Gosse failed fully to apprehend the significance of the Puritan movement during the first half of the seventeenth century, especially in its relations to our literary development during that period. The transition from Shakespeare to Pope was, in large measure, one phase in the development of that modern spirit which so vigorously asserted itself in Puritanism. The growth of physical science, the expansion of political consciousness, the change in our prose and poetic style are all co-ordinate features in the great simultaneous movement. The Long Parliament met in 1640; Newton was born in 1642, the year in which Galileo died, as well as that in which the great constitutional struggle was begun between royalty and parliament. The political heroes of 1640-1642, aimed at the same results as those achieved by the revolution of 1688. In every manifestation of English consciousness, the same critical, rationalistic temper is displayed, and our literary development accords with the action of the general law. Mr. Shepherd illustrated this proposition by several examples drawn from contemporary history. He concurred, in the main, with Mr. Gosse's views regarding the influence of the classical era upon our modern style, in prose as well as in poetry, citing Lord Macaulay as a conspicuous illustration of their correctness. Nearly all of Macaulay's tastes and sympathies seemed to identify him with the eighteenth rather than the nineteenth century.

In some instances, notably in the case of Thomas Carlyle, it is not possible to discover any connection or influence, such as is claimed by Mr. Gosse. A style such as Carlyle's is, in some regards, apparently an independent evolution, though it contains passages in which the fervor and brilliancy of the seventeenth century and the great prose poets, are strikingly reproduced.

Mr. Shepherd concluded by expressing a hope that Mr. Gosse would, at some day, afford us a philosophic treatment of the most interesting period embraced in his lectures. Every student of English would cordially welcome such a work, as it is one for the execution of which Mr. Gosse is eminently qualified.

The Secretary then announced that he had just received, through the mail, Prof. J. J. Stürzinger's paper, entitled